



South Dakota Department of the Military South Dakota Department of Veterans Affairs



H13 TAKES ITS LAST FLIGHT

The South Dakota National Guard Museum in Pierre has housed the H-13B for numerous years. H-13B helicopters were flown by the South Carolina and South Dakota National Guard during the late 1940's and early 1950's as both an observation platform and a medical transport.

"This particular H-13B helicopter, more than any other, embodied the Army's first rotary wing aircraft because it is serial number one, said SDNG Museum Director Sonja Johnson.

This past week the helicopter was disassembled and loaded on a CH-47 Chinook helicopter and transported to South Carolina where it will be restored to look as it did in 1948. The H-13B will become an overhead hanging display at the South Carolina Military Museum.

Director Johnson said an undertaking of this magnitude required assistance and was thankful she had the leadership and commitment of SSG Dave Trautman, MSG Chad Schmitz and MSG Kelly Moore assisting her with this project.



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THE SOUTH CAROLINA
MILITARY MUSEUM



VA REPORTS NEW TRAINING YIELDS FASTER, MORE ACCURATE CLAIMS PROCESSING

A report released this week by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs reveals that new training initiatives for VA employees who process and evaluate veterans' disability claims are yielding faster, more accurate decisions for Veterans.

In the face of dramatically increasing workloads, the VA is pursuing new ways to train its employees in the complex regulations governing the VA's disability compensation program.

Designers of the revamped "Challenge" training model for new decision-makers overhauled the previous curriculum and more than doubled classroom instruction time to eight weeks.

The VA reports that students of the new model completed 150 percent more claims per day, with a 30 percent increase in accuracy, when compared to student performance under the previous program. To date, more than 1,300 employees have taken the training, which is now in place for all newly appointed or reassigned employees who handle disability claims.

The VA completed 1 million claims per year the last two fiscal years, and is on target to complete another 1 million claims in FY2012. Even so, many veterans are still waiting too long to get the benefits they have earned and deserve. The VA is aggressively building a strong foundation for a

paperless, digital disability claims system – transforming how the VA operates. The VA is hopeful this plan will help the VA achieve Secretary Shinseki's goal: claim completion in less than 125 days with 98 percent accuracy in 2015 – delivering faster, better decisions for veterans.

Redesign of the Challenge program is just one part of the VA's comprehensive investment in its people. The VA has also added Quality Review Teams at each of its 56 regional offices to quickly identify any processing errors made by its employees and provide on-the-spot remedial training at the earliest possible stage in the claims process.

To learn more about what the VA is doing to prepare its employees to deliver first-rate and timely benefits and services to our Nation's Veterans, view the full Challenge report at: <http://www.va.gov/opa/publications/docs/Evaluation-Report.pdf>.



Veterans Benefits
Administration

Evaluation Report of VBA Transformational Initiative

Impact of VBA's New Challenge Training Program

Prepared by:

Veterans Benefits Administration

Compensation Service

and

Office of Employee Development & Training

July 10, 2012

VA PARTNERS WITH AHA IN FIGHT AGAINST HEART DISEASE IN WOMEN

The United States Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is teaming up with the American Heart Association (AHA) in beefing up efforts towards diagnosing and treating heart disease in women.

In the last ten years, the number of women using VA healthcare has doubled, according to VA officials.

The "Go Red For Women" program of the American Heart Association is actively trying to address issues that are known as risk factors for heart disease, including such factors as smoking, poor diet, and being overweight.

Most of the women who seek VA health care, according to Dr. Sally Haskell, acting director of comprehensive women's health for the Veteran's Health Administration, are between 45 and 65 years old – an age when women are more at risk for cardiovascular disease.

The VA's efforts, according to Dr. Robert Jesse, the principal deputy undersecretary for health of the Department of Veterans Affairs, includes screening women earlier and more often for high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other issues related to heart disease. Heart disease has been identified as the leading cause of death among women.

One tool available to women who have had experiences with heart disease is the Go Red Heart Match database. Women can visit the website below, create a profile, indicate their military status and connect with others who have had similar experiences.

<http://www.goredforwomen.org/HeartMatch/default.aspx>

Make sure **she** gets the message.



It's **our** job to give **her** the best care anywhere.

WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE



VA and the American Heart Association's Go Red movement are raising awareness of heart disease as the **#1 killer of women Veterans**. Connect with other military women in the Go Red Heart Match program.

LEARN MORE: www.womenshealth.va.gov

Go Red trademark of AHA, Red Dress trademark of DHHS.



WOMEN VETERANS HEALTH CARE



VA HEALTH CARE | Defining EXCELLENCE in the 21st Century

740TH WINS NATIONAL WEAPONS QUALIFICATION AWARD

The South Dakota Army National Guard's 740th Transportation Company was named the winner of the 2011 National Guard Association Pershing Award for having the nation's highest weapons qualification rate.

The South Dakota unit, headquartered out of Milbank with Detachment 1 in Aberdeen, edged out a unit from the Idaho Army National Guard, as well as units from across the country to win the national award for the second time in six years.

The 740th earned the highest figure of merit score during annual qualification firing with assigned individual weapons. The unit's overall weapons qualification rate was 99.4 percent; qualifying 64 experts, 75 sharpshooters and 30 marksmen, giving them a figure of merit score of 95.4 percent.

"This award reflects deeply on the skills and devotion of the Soldiers of the 740th," said Capt. Jeremy Schafer, company commander. "It reassures that the training is effective and sufficient."

"Marksmanship is something our Soldiers have learned so well, that whether they are qualifying on the range or sighting in their deer rifles, they use the techniques that they have been taught," said Staff Sgt. Matthew Tjaden, 740th training noncommissioned officer.

Tjaden said the unit's application of soldiering techniques goes beyond the rifle range.

"Most of our unit takes the training they receive home with them, in all areas," Tjaden said. "From rifle qualification to vehicle operations to treating a casualty, almost everything can be applied to everyday life and these guys know that."

The award was established in the 1930s in honor of General John J. Pershing, the only Soldier who served as General of the Armies.

"The 740th takes pride in marksmanship and will continue to push the limits to continue to excel," said Schafer. "What the 740th does sets the standards."



Upcoming Events

July 21-22—Sioux Falls Air Show

Jul. 21—SD Convoy of Hope Stand Down—Rapid City

July 28-29—Thirty-Day Yellow Ribbon Event for the 189th AVN—Rapid City

Aug 4-5— American Legion Riders Chapter 7 Poker Run—Hot Springs

Aug. 15—Veterans Job Fair—Sioux Falls VFW (3601 S. Minnesota Avenue) 10:00 am—2:00 pm

Aug. 23—VABHHCS Stand Down—Rosebud/Mission

Aug. 27-29—VSO Annual Benefits School—Pierre

Aug. 27—VABHHCS Stand Down—Rapid City

Aug. 29—Standing Rock Sioux Tribe Stand Down—McLaughlin

Aug. 30—Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe Stand Down— Eagle Butte

Aug. 30– Sept. 3—SD State Fair—Huron (Veterans Day—Aug. 30)

Sept. 11—Stand Down—Wagner National Guard Armory—610 E. SD HWY 46 (10:00 am—2:00 pm)

Sept. 21—Stand Down—Sioux Falls - VFW— 3601 S. Minnesota Ave. (9:00 am—3:00 pm)

Sept. 25—Stand Down—Aberdeen Civic Center—203 S. Washington (2:00 pm—7:00 pm)

Sept. 25 Pierre Homeless Connect

Veterans & Spouses Job Fair

Wednesday, August 15, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

VFW Post #628, 3601 S. Minnesota Ave.

Sioux Falls



Visit with over 50 local and regional employers about job opportunities.

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